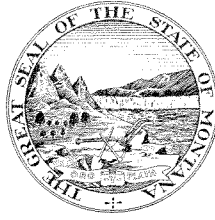


Montana State Senate



SENATOR ART WITTICH
SENATE DISTRICT 35
GALLATIN COUNTY

HELENA ADDRESS:
PO BOX 200500
HELENA, MONTANA 59620-0500
PHONE: (406) 444-4800

HOME ADDRESS:
3116 SOURDOUGH RD.
BOZEMAN, MT 59715
PHONE: (406) 585-7418

COMMITTEES:
TAXATION
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
FISH AND GAME

The Big Sky Country

July 8, 2011

Senator Orrin Hatch
104 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Balanced Budget Amendment

Dear Senator Hatch:

I commend you for sponsoring a Constitutional Amendment for a balanced budget (S.J. Res. 10). As you know, many states have already called for such an amendment under Article V, and the 62nd Legislature of Montana recently passed my bill calling for such an amendment (S.J. 4 – see attached).

It is obvious the federal deficit and debt is out of control. State policies during the last fifty years have sought federal funds, with the federal government's complicity. Consequently, over half the states now receive a majority of their state budgets from the federal government (with borrowed funds). However, responsible states are increasingly taking the position that the federal funds are not preferable, or justifiable.

States are in a unique position to help the federal government re-establish fiscal sanity. Unfortunately, when states are courageous and responsible enough to refuse federal funds, the federal government imposes "level of effort" rules that prohibit the states from utilizing a portion of the funds without risking all remaining funds for a particular program. Why not allow us to exercise fiscal restraint?

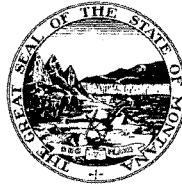
Passage of the Balanced Budget Amendment will align the federal government with existing state constitutional requirements for fiscal discipline. Beyond a constitutional amendment, I ask that you also reform the federal funding rules to provide innovative states the flexibility to spend efficiently, effectively, and responsibly. While Congressman Rehberg's REFUND Act (H.R. 1358) is a valuable step in the right direction, I ask that you expand upon such initiatives. We stand ready to lead; please allow us to do so.

Respectfully yours,


Senator Art Wittich

cc: Montana Congressional Delegation,
Senator Jim DeMint

Encl.



A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING CONGRESS TO SUPPORT AN AMENDMENT TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION TO REQUIRE A BALANCED FEDERAL BUDGET EXCEPT IN TIMES OF WAR.

WHEREAS, Article V of the United States Constitution provides methods for proposing amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Legislature of Montana deems an amendment for the United States Constitution requiring a balanced federal budget, except in times of war, necessary for the good of the American people.

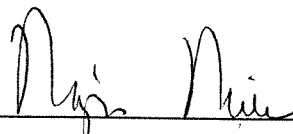
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the Legislature of the State of Montana in accordance with the provisions of Article V of the United States Constitution supports an amendment to the United States Constitution to require a balanced federal budget, except in times of war, and to prevent the federal government from appropriating or otherwise spending funds in excess of anticipated revenues.

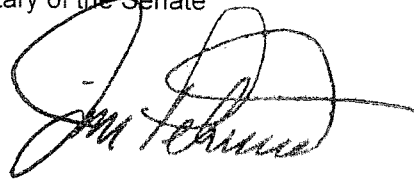
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be dispatched to the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, to the Secretaries of the United States and Montana Senates, to the Clerks of the United States and Montana Houses of Representatives, to each member of the Montana congressional delegation, and to the presiding officers of each house of the Legislature of each state in the Union requesting their cooperation.

- END -

I hereby certify that the within joint resolution,
SJ 0004, originated in the Senate.



Secretary of the Senate



President of the Senate

Signed this 19th day
of April, 2011.



Speaker of the House

Signed this 20th day
of April, 2011.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 4

INTRODUCED BY A. WITTICH

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA URGING CONGRESS TO SUPPORT AN AMENDMENT TO THE UNITED STATES CONSTITUTION TO REQUIRE A BALANCED FEDERAL BUDGET EXCEPT IN TIMES OF WAR.

STATE OF MONTANA

FILED

April 20th, 2011

Secretary of State

By Shannon H. Stevens